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[For information on clan and phratry rules of commensality, see Categories 614, 615, and 264.]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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the Nīlgiris writes to me that "though the average Badaga is thrifty and hard-working, there is a tendency for him to be lazy when he is sure of his meal. When a person is sick in another village, his relatives make it an excuse to go and see him, and they have to be fed. When the first crop is raised, the idler pretends that 'worms' have crept into the crop, and the gods have to be propitiated, and there is a feast. Marriage or death, of course, draws a crowd to be fed or feasted. All this means extra expenditure, and a considerable drain on the slender income of the family. The Rowthan (Muhammadan merchant) from the Tamil country is near at hand to lend money, as he has carried his bazar to the very heart of the Badaga villages. First it is a bag of rāgi (food grain), a piece of cloth to throw on the coffin, or a few rupees worth of rice and curry-stuff doled out by the all-accommodating Rowthan at a price out of all proportion to the market rate, and at a rate ranging from six pies to two annas for the rupee. The ever impecunious Badaga has no means of extricating himself, with a slender income, which leaves no margin for redeeming debts. The bond is renewed every quarter or half year, and the debt grows by leaps and bounds, and consumes all his earthly goods, including lands. The advent of lawyers on the hills has made the Badagas a most litigious people, and they resort to the courts, which means expenditure of money, and neglect of agriculture." In the funeral song of the Badagas, which has been translated by Mr. Gover,* one of the crimes enumerated, for which atonement must be made, is that of preferring a complaint to the Sirkar (Government), and one of their numerous proverbs embodies the same idea. "If you

* Folk-songs of Southern India.

553 A child receives its name on the seventh, ninth, or
• [574] eleventh day. A sumptuous meal is given to the community, and the grandfather (paternal, if possible) milks a cow, and pours the milk into a brass cup placed in the milk-house. With it a little cooked sāmai grain is mixed. The babe is washed with water brought from a stream; marked on the forehead with sacred ashes; a turmeric-dyed thread is tied round its waist; a silver or iron bangle placed on its wrists; and a silver bead tied by a thread round its neck. Thus decorated, the infant is taken up by the oldest man of the village who is not a widower, who gives it a name, which has already been chosen. The elder, and the child's parents and grandparents then place a little milk in its mouth.

852 Children, both male and female, go through a shaving ceremony, usually when they are seven months old. The infant is seated in the lap of a Badaga, and, after water has been applied to its head by a Badaga or a barber, the maternal uncle removes some of the hair with a razor, and then hands it over to another Badaga or a barber to complete the operation.

763 Of the death rites as carried out by the Badaga subdivision, the following note was recorded during a visit to Kotagiri. When death is drawing near, a gold coin, called Vīrarāya hana or fanam, dipped in butter or ghī, is given to the dying man to swallow. If he is too far gone to be capable of swallowing, the coin is, according to Mr. Natesa Sastri, tied round the arm. But our informants told us that this is not done at the present day. "If," Mr. Gover writes,* "the tiny coin slips down, well.
(775) He will need both gold and ghī, the one to sustain his strength in the dark journey to the river of death, the

* *Op. cit.*

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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614 mous. They are in fact like any other Badaga clan in matters of marriage, having unions with other clans of dissimilar subculture, especially the Kanakkas, and even marrying meat-eating Gaudas.

614 If a Ha:ruva girl marries a Gauda then no meat is ever cooked
262 in his house, and his wife remains a vegetarian. If her husband wants to eat meat he may arrange to have some cooked elsewhere and eat it away from home. The children of the union are fully Gaudas and will normally be non-vegetarians. When the Ha:ruva woman dies her household usually reverts to a non-vegetarian diet. It has been reported that, on the other hand, 'If a Badaga [Gauda] woman marries a Haruva she has to give up meat-eating and, to cleanse her, a red hot iron is put to her tongue' [13] 'After this she would not dare to eat meat... she would lose her eyesight' (Karl, 1945, 3). From this we can see that a woman married into a Ha:ruva family is expected to accept its dietary norms, whereas a Ha:ruva girl married into a socially lower clan is not expected to accept their diet (Tignous, 1911, 117). A Ha:ruva girl marrying into a Lingayat family does not change her diet but will have to wear the *linga* if it is offered her and to behave as a Lingayat. When a Ha:ruva man marries a Lingayat girl he continues to wear his thread while she usually continues to wear the *linga* if it has already been given her (see Plate 6).

614 Ha:ruvas are willing to accept food in the inner and more sacred
264 room (where household gods are installed) of any other clan except the Toreas. They would not demean themselves by entering a Torea house; and they would probably be offered food only in the outer room of a Wodea house. Wodeas never accept food in a Ha:ruva home as they consider Ha:ruvas inferior; but the other three Lingayat clans will eat in the inner room of a Ha:ruva house. Even meat-eating Adikiris, who are not Lingayats, can be
● [514] offered vegetarian food in the inner Ha:ruva room. The same holds true for visiting Gaudas and Kaggusis, people who may often come if related to the Ha:ruva household by marriage. Until the 1950s the Ha:ruvas also allowed Todas, Kurumbas, Irulas and Kasuvas to eat in the outer room, but Kotas were thought too polluting to pass beyond the entrance; since that time only Todas have been allowed into the house.

ADIKIRIS

614 The vegetarian Adikiris are a Lingayat clan numbering perhaps
[162]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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themselves are the women's work-groups, small cliques of village wives who work together in the fields and elsewhere, exchanging gossip and favours in the process. These female networks link up with the male ones through the wives of influential men (cf. Plate 10).

The sequence of contacts that have to be made if someone in the village is to influence or be influenced by people in the above list constitutes an intra-village network.

Inter-Village Networks

Two kinds of network fall under this heading, one linking agnates, the second affines. The first are ritual and juridical networks, linking up with distantly related men in other villages of the commune. This commune was first settled, it is claimed, by a man who founded the maximal lineage to which nearly all of the inhabitants belong. Hulla:ḍa people mostly belong to one of the three major lineages, this one established by Koñga Hetappa, one of the commune founder's three sons. Within Hulla:ḍa and a nearby village (Ke:ti) the lineage is further divided into four minimal lineages, each descended from one of Koñga Etappa's four sons. The more important festivals are celebrated in common by all sixteen villages in the commune, using ritual personnel from any of these villages. Serious problems are discussed by all the village headmen at the commune council. Hulla:ḍa villagers can establish contact with the wealthiest and most influential men in the commune by activating these two networks, either through a village headman or through a friend who has helped in the rituals.

Secondly, the marriage and visiting networks link Hulla:ḍa with villages beyond this commune. Marriages account for a network of social contacts with nearly two dozen other villages, and these are frequently activated by informal visits and by attendance at the festivals, weddings and funerals of affines. Small loans may be sought along these networks (Hockings, in press).

Inter-Tribal Networks

The Badagas of Hulla:ḍa were linked for certain economic and ritual purposes with particular Kotas, Todas, Kurumbas and Chettis. For the most part these associations have fallen into

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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796 threshold first; to plant the left foot before the right would bring the ceremony to a most inauspicious end.

Even though the ceremony has concluded, the men who have performed in it take various precautions to insure that they retain their state of purity for the remainder of the day. The meal that they eat is a vegetarian [262] one; thus they avoid polluting themselves and their houses by having meat cooked on this occasion. To start the meal with butter is very auspicious, since eating butter is in Badaga thinking a sign of affluence and good luck. When the men have finished the meal they are careful to wash in [515] cold water—the prescribed means of washing whenever Badagas wish [783] to remain in a pure state. Afterwards they can clean and repair the cattle shed if they wish, for this is a meritorious act performed in a sacred place. Otherwise the only permitted activities are the cleaning of their clothes and of themselves.

Finally, we must consider the social relations which are given expression during the ceremony. The various sources of the community's welfare and of its power structure are reflected in the ceremony, albeit in symbolic reference. The family is represented usually by its male head, otherwise by a chosen male representative. The lineage is nowadays symbolized in the common pit used by all the cattle of each lineage. The entire hamlet [621] community is represented in concerted action by the party of men who come from every household in the hamlet, as well as by the man from the Great House who is the living descendant of the founding ancestor.

One curious element is the habit of feeding each celebrant afterwards in the outer, less sanctified, room of his house. Men regularly eat in the [264] inner room; the people who normally must eat in the outer room are the [562] women and all visitors from lower-status phratries of the Badaga com- [574] munity. It would seem that the man who gives salt to his cattle is confident of his own ritual purity and that of his entire house on this occasion. By eating in the outer room he suggests that status differences between men and women, and between his phratry and others, are of no importance provided ritual purity prevails. This attitude is also reflected in other aspects of [582] Badaga culture: people of higher and lower ranking clans intermarry, [615] both hypergamously and hypogamously, and members of lower ranking phratries sometimes participate in the temple rituals of higher phratries without polluting the temples.

562 Women are excluded altogether from the salt-giving ceremony, if only because there is a risk that the presence of a ritually unclean woman 796 might subvert the benefits looked for from God on this auspicious occasion. And yet the women do play a necessary "backstage" role in cleaning the house, decorating it, bringing in water, and cooking the meal. Segregation [621] of women from the ceremony underlines a basic fact of hamlet organization: the hamlet is exogamous, and hence all wives in it are "outsiders," members initially of other hamlets. Furthermore, women inherit neither land nor cattle. Symbolically the ceremony concludes an annual pact between the men and God for the fruitful blessing of crops, cattle, and children, all of which in Badaga law belong to men alone. Even so, the oldest woman

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Badagas typically eat twice daily, once in the morning around eight o'clock and then again in the evening (Gaymard 1924: 3).[1] Each meal consists usually of two courses, the first being a curry, probably of vegetables, eaten with rice or millet. The second course, providing a third of the bulk of the meal, is curd or buttermilk. Usually with this latter course people eat a teaspoonful or so of hot lime relish, made with limes, chilies and salt. Despite the ground chilies it is "neutral" in its heating effect, and is said to dispel a disease characterized by dizziness, nausea and vomiting. At other times of the day Badagas "drink coffee, which because of the cold climate is a necessity for them and not a luxury" (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 247). The tedium of these meals is relieved by occasional sweets made from crude sugar, honey, or high-quality millets. Fruits are always appreciated too: "Who died by eating a jackfruit? Who expanded by eating a banana?"

The usual meal and its preparation have been described in these terms:

> The women pound regularly every day in their mortars of stone... a kind of millet, which forms the basis of the daily alimentation. The grain thus decorticated is boiled and served. They sit down on the floor...and...with the fingers of the right hand they crush these boiled grains and dip them in a sauce mostly composed of pepper, mustard and coriander; of this spiced mixture they make little balls of which they consume a number according to their appetite.
>
> Sometimes the housewives prepare cakes of cornflour boiled and mixed with honey and milk. Butter is used for seasoning (Tignous 1911: 116-17).

In most Badaga homes each Monday, the weekly holiday, and in the more well-to-do ones on both Mondays and Fridays, a woman should not cook ordinary green vegetables for the curry but make a richer meal, using beans and peas and, if non-vegetarian, some meat for the dish. A similarly rich dish should be prepared for a

[1]Readers who may be confused by my apparent use of an "ethnographic present" here and throughout the book should know that *if I put a statement in the present tense it is to the best of my knowledge currently valid, and if I follow it with a citation date, such as 1924, it was also noted at that time.*

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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252 visiting affine, for otherwise he will conclude that he is not welcome
[574] in the house. One should eat with one's relatives: "If eaten with ten
252 people it is milk; if eaten by oneself it is shit." Several proverbs
539 suggest that not all affines are to be made welcome, though: "Is it a bad thing for the affine who has become ruined and came [to us to eat] a poor quality of finger millet and sour buttermilk?" The useless housewife is one who is too lazy to cook regularly: "Not caring about her husband's hunger, a bad wife will eat the old food herself [rather than cook]."

Earth-eating

261 2.4. The eating of earths is widespread in South India (Hooper and Mann 1906: 254). We find that the practice has been reported in particular from the part of Mysore whence the Badagas fled in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that a baked edible clay is even sold in the bazaars there (Thurston 1901: 121; Hooper and Mann 1906: 256). In that part of Mysore the consumption of raw or baked clay was fairly common among women especially, and was said to bring no ill effects. An informant did however state that
261 among chronic earth-eaters "their appearance suggests that they
164 are suffering from pernicious anaemia, the face being unnaturally swollen or puffed and the abdomen distended, while the limbs are shrunk except at the joints, which appear enlarged and are said to be painful" (Thurston 1901: 121). Early medical officers reported on the dire consequences of habitual earth-eating, especially mentioning anaemia and dysentery (Hooper and Mann 1906: 263-70).
[165] It has not been possible to discover whether the high death-rate due to dysentery among Badagas (see 9.7) can be attributed in part to this habit. Hooper and Mann (1906: 254) reported the practice as
261 widespread throughout India, and as chiefly confined to labourers
[171] and pregnant women, including Badagas. The practice is common amongst them, pregnant women being especially fond of the earth, even though older people abuse them for eating it because they do not think it a foodstuff. The earth, said to have a pleasant taste and smell, is yellowish-brown in colour, and is called *suttekal*. It is actually a weathered feldspar, chemically aluminium silicate, and is the
261 same thing as kaolin. Humans do of course need traces of aluminium
146 in their diet. Dietary deficiency where soils are heavily leached might thus explain the practice; as it perhaps does the eating of charcoal

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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"bad wind" unless the death occurred in her own home. The effect of a "bad wind" the woman has encountered can also be felt by her baby or transmitted through the milk to her baby, and then it will make him sick.

One or two days after a wedding the bride, by this time perhaps no longer a virgin, returns on a belief ceremonial visit to her parents' home. As she enters the village the woman accompanying her calls out for people to keep infants and nursing mothers out of sight. The bride can set eyes on unweaned infants, but their parents must make sure that neither the children themselves nor their mothers see the girl, lest their milk dry up by reason of the "bad wind" associated with the girl's recent sexual activity. Were a nursing mother to see the bride she would probably curse her, and this could cause infertility in the latter.

More generally it is felt that the most dangerous "bad wind" would be one associated with a person who came to look at the baby just after having had intercourse. Such a person should first take a bath, then put on some clean clothes and wait at least half-an-hour. In the same way if an apparently pure man comes to visit a baby and he has travelled more than a mile he will bring a "bad wind" with him. He should therefore wait in the yard or on the veranda for a short time before entering the house. In this situation the mother would even wait the appropriate amount of time before bowing to his hand if the visitor were her own father. If a nursing mother is obliged to be near a corpse, she also will take a bath and change afterwards before going near her baby. Should an unweaned baby die all other nursing mothers in the village and neighbouring hamlets are expected to visit the bereaved house before the next sunset. They ask the unfortunate mother how she is feeling. Badagas believe that if any nursing mother who was inregular contact with this woman failed to observe this common courtesy, her own infant would soon become ill. And if such a woman nonetheless does fail to visit she must not set eyes on the bereaved mother again until after the next new or the next full moon. This is said to be because the latter might become envious on seeing the other mother nursing, and her sorrow would somehow affect that woman. The nursing mother who failed in this customary courtesy would be afraid that her breasts would dry up, should she meet the bereaved woman shortly after burial of the dead child.

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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day or two before the healthy villagers return home all those who have been suffering from smallpox and have stayed in the hamlet leave it early in the morning, and stay in the jungle for a day or two themselves; nowadays they go to a town instead. By leaving early, nobody else runs the risk of setting eyes on them. They must go beyond the hamlet boundary; the intention of this being that if any smallpox remains with them somebody of a different hamlet may catch it. They return home on the evening after the rest of the inhabitants have returned, so that the latter can find a deserted hamlet at the time of their re-entry.

When this day comes the men and boys gather together their cattle and drive them into the hamlet; the implication being that it is no longer a settlement but a grazing ground. The people follow the cattle, shouting "*hau hau*" ("*Hooray!*" a ceremonial cry of jubilation), then gather up the dry thorn bushes on the work-yards and burn them. Along the front of each Badaga house is a line of flat stones set into the work-yard and projecting about a foot from the house wall. These are called *ucce gare* (lit. "urine slab"), since in the old days people could bathe or urinate on them at night without fully leaving the house and so exposing themselves to the witchcraft of Kurumbas. On returning to the hamlet somebody from each household gets a crowbar, raises one of these slabs out of the ground, and then replaces it. This brief act symbolizes building the house anew.

It is only after 19 days have passed since this ceremonial re-entry that a person from a recently evacuated hamlet can either visit another or receive visitors from one: 19 days, because 18 days is said to be the maximum period between a new moon and a full one, or *vice versa*. Followihg the eighteenth day after the hamlet re-entry a communal funeral is held for all the people who have died during the smallpox epidemic. This is done with

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

164 CHOLERA (*ba:ndi be:di*)

7.6. Cholera is primarily an epidemic of the low country and is reportedly introduced to the Nilgiri Hills by inhabitants who visit the plains (Orton 1831: 406; Madras 1928: 63; Ketti Medical Mission 1943: 5). It is said to be caused by an evil god or goddess, and is one of the epidemics loosely labelled *na:du no:* ("countrywide illness").

Within two hours of a person's being attacked by cholera he will begin constant vomiting and diarrhoea. There is no accompanying fever; and it is by these two indications that the case is recognized as cholera. The body is now below its normal temperature and so must be given "heating" foods, generally arrack (2.6) and perhaps brandy; the patient is wrapped warmly and heated however possible. Others in the hamlet feel they have no chance to placate the deity who has brought cholera, or to stop her from coming. As soon as it is known that cholera has come everybody leaves the hamlet except for the one or two relatives who tend the patient. These people clean up after him, and are careful to keep their bodies heated along with his. Although people occasionally survive cholera, they most usually die in under two days. As soon as a person dies he is taken from the house and buried, whether it be day or night. No funeral takes place at this time, and no cremation is attempted.

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When the villagers know there is no longer any case of cholera in the hamlet they stay away from it for at least a further fifteen days, since they must allow the passage of the full period of fourteen days that separates the new moon from the full, or *vice versa*. Once back home, and unlike their return following a smallpox epidemic, they can immediately receive visitors from elsewhere or go anywhere themselves.

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(574)

164 MALARIA (*adurejara*)
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7.7 Malaria is considered a kind of fever, and is believed to be caught by drinking the water at places on the lower Nilgiri slopes, below the usual levels of Badaga settlement (Hockings 1974 : 210).

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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761 789 sees who has shouted the news, some of his closer friends and relatives from that hamlet will immediately leave for his house, to pay respect to his corpse. A woman can resort to the same subterfuge only if she can find a man to make the dreadful pronouncement on her behalf. The process of misleading the mourning friends is supposed to prolong a person's life: it may also be done by relatives for an influential man who is indeed sick, but who they hope will be enabled to live longer by this process of cheating death. 763 This concern contrasts with the cynical treatment sometimes offered to dying people in the last century: "When a rich Badaga is very ill and the agony approaches all the relatives come and gather near him and see to it that he is well provided for his journey into the realm of the dead. For this end they make the dying man swallow two small gold pieces with butter... If the ill man does not die [761] very soon and the relatives think he lasts too long they give him opium in order to hasten his hour of death." (Mörike 1849: 102).

As mentioned above, the sight of two crows in congress is an 763 omen of impending death. Other birds give similar information. If 825 the forest eagle-owl (*Huhua nipalensis*) calls $^{3}gu::_{1}$ there will certainly be a death soon in the hamlet where it was heard: if it is already past the new moon, death will come before the full moon. Thus if anyone is sick in the hamlet closest to where this bird is heard, people know he will die; and if no one is sick, women nearing their delivery take special care. (Other kinds of cries made by the same bird indicate whether or not rain is coming.)

761 539 Nothing is more certain than death. As various Badaga proverbs put it: "If you live to six years you will die; if you live to a hundred years you will die"; "Even though you can escape at any time you cannot escape the time of death;" "You have paid up his padded account after seeing it; there is no sorrow when a man dies in old age"; "Even if all the [Nilgiri] divisions leave you, the burial ground won't leave you alone"; and again, "Even if one lives a thousand years, death won't pass him by."

9.5. When an old person becomes sick and seems likely to die, 763 he is given a separate bed even if he did not previously have one, and is treated with circumspection. Messages about his true condi- 763 tion are sent to a number of other Badaga hamlets where the dying man has relatives, inviting those people to visit him. Unless the ●574 dying person is more than 40 such visitors are not invited, because [203] a much greater chance of recovery is presumed, while a large party

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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of visitors might, on the other hand, cause heart failure in the sick person. The headman who sends the invitation to other villages merely directs it to other headmen, and does not stipulate how many visitors are expected. The party coming from each hamlet is organized by someone there related to the dying person; usually a male. These visitors may bring milk or other gifts when they come, and have to be fed by the family of the sick person during their visit. There is an element of bidding farewell to the dying, which is often expressed by Badagas with the belief that nobody should be alone when he dies. At night-time, therefore, the lamp must remain alight and all of the villagers sit up singing songs or listening to the radio. This event is known as *no:ka:patu*, "watching the sick." It could continue for as long as several months of a terminal illness, although with a reduced number of participants after the first few nights (Mörike 1857: 60).

Badagas believe no one should die beyond the boundaries of his village. In recent times the hold of this custom has been such that one hears of patients dangerously ill in a hospital whose relatives insist on bringing them home to die, a decision which certainly kills some people who might otherwise have hope of recovery. Nevertheless one former headman said that after a discussion about whether to bring a dying woman from the hospital, he was recently able to prevail with the argument that a life is more precious than any custom, and that to bring the woman home before she had either got better or died was tantamount to murder, since the monsoon weather would surely finish her off in the hamlet.

Shortly before death occurs a 25-paise coin (1/4 rupee, but originally a small gold coin of another value) must be dipped in clarified butter and given to the dying person, who should try to swallow it. This rite of *hana benne* ("coin butter") is done even for children and those dying in hospitals, as it is thought that a person cannot get to heaven without this coin to pay for the food, drink and tolls on his journey there, and the butter will give him strength for it (Gover 1871: 66; Tignous 1911: 119). That some people choke on the coin seems very likely, and instances of a person recovering after swallowing the coin are numerous enough that today only a small minority still follow this custom. As a less acceptable alternative, the buttered coin may be inserted in the mouth after death, or else wrapped in a cloth and tied to the dying man's arm (Grigg 1880: 227; Natesa Sastri 1892: 833; Schmidt 1894: 257).

•574 615 Wodeyas will not accept food from the Haruvas or any socially lower phratry, although they will eat in any other Wodeya house (Grigg 1880: 220). Other Badaga phratries accept food -- which is always vegetarian -- in the outer room of a Wodeya house. Members of any of the other Nilgiri tribes will accept vegetarian food from the Wodeyas too; but they are not allowed to pass beyond the veranda into the home.

615 [162] The Haruvas are a small sib living in only four hamlets. Like the Wodeyas, they probably number about 3000 people. This does not mean that Haruva hamlets are unusually large, for it is very common for a single Haruva family to live permanently in a Gauda hamlet: perhaps two thousand of the Haruvas are so [793] distributed. This is because Haruvas customarily act as priests in the Gauda [614] temples (Benbow 1928: 7-9). Haruvas, Kapakkas, Adikaris and Kaggusis are the four exogamous sibs which make up their phratry -- the only unnamed one, incidentally. But of the four sibs just mentioned, Haruvas alone have challenged the Wodeyas for prime position in the Badaga social hierarchy. The ramifications of their claim will receive further attention when we discuss Badaga factions.

614 The Haruvas are Śaivites, but not Lingayats. For over a century at least they have been claiming that they were originally Brahmins before they ever left Mysore for the Nilgiris, and that they should therefore now be treated as such (Francis 1908: 131). Little of their behavior accords with the orthodoxy of true [793] Brahmins in the villages of the plains, however. The three indicators in support of their Brahminhood are the indubitable facts that they are vegetarians, they wear a thread across one shoulder, and they do very frequently act as temple priests to the great majority of Śaivite Badagas.

262 562 614 [753] not dare to eat meat because of the superstitious belief that she would lose her eyesight" (Karl 1945: 3). From this we can see that a woman who marries into a Haruva family is expected to accept its dietary norms, whereas a Haruva girl marrying into a socially lower sib is not expected to accept its dietary norms (Tignous 1911: 117). If a Haruva girl marries into an Adikari or Kapakka family there will be no change in her diet; but she will be expected to wear the lingam if it is given her, and to behave as a Lingayat. When a Haruva marries a Lingayat girl he continues to wear his thread but she usually continues to wear the lingam (if one has already been given her).

514 614 [186] Haruvas are willing to accept food in the inner (more sacred) room of any other Badaga sib except the Toreyas. They would not demean themselves to enter a Toreya house; and they would probably be offered food only in the outer room of a Wodeya house. Wodeyas never accept food in a Haruva house, as they believe Haruvas to be inferior; but the other Lingayat sibs both eat in the inner room of a Haruva house. Even meat-eating Adikaris, who are not Lingayats, are offered vegetarian food in a Haruva's inner room. The same holds true for visiting Kaggusis and Gaudas; people who might often have occasion to visit a Haruva household if they are related to it by marriage. Haruvas also allow Todas, Kurumbas, Irulas and Kasubas to eat in the outer (less sacred) room of the house, but Kotas are considered too polluting to pass beyond the entrance.

614 582 (162) The vegetarian Adikaris are a Lingayat sib, numbering perhaps 3500 people, who inhabit sixteen hamlets scattered across the plateau. The sib should only intermarry with Haruvas or Kapakkas; but in the past 30 years a few have married girls from Lingayat families in Mysore. Rarely will a girl from the

614 Lingayats (although since about 1960 some of them have taken to wearing the lingam again).

574 614 Adikaris, like Kapakkas, admit Haruvas, Kaggunis, and other Lingayats to the inner room for meals; (Wodeyas refuse to eat with them, however); Gaudas and Toreyas may only eat in the outer room, and members of the other tribes are not allowed past the entrance door. Adikaris and Kapakkas eat only at the houses of Haruvas and Wodeyas, where they can feel sure of receiving the correctly prepared vegetarian dishes.

614 The Kapakkas, although now agriculturists like all other Badagas, once held the monopoly over literacy in the Nilgiris (Grigg 1880: 221). Their name means "accountant", and is generally taken to indicate that some of their forefathers acted as village accountants when a ruler in the Coimbatore Plains, probably the East India Company, became powerful enough to demand the levy of taxes. Although the Kapakkas are Lingayats, and today have a status equal with that of the Adikaris, there are many Badagas who will whisper darkly that originally the Kapakkas were not Kanarese at all, but Tamilians. The Kapakkas themselves would not own to this, since experience with the Madras Government officials has led nearly all Badagas to despise the Tamilian but to be more charitably inclined toward the Mysorean; still, it may well be true that the Kapakkas were Gaundans, an agricultural caste from the Coimbatore Plain, who were brought to the Nilgiris because they knew how to write (Grigg 1880: 221). My discovery of some 500 palm-leaf manuscripts hidden in two Kapakka hamlets lends support to this belief. These leaves were written two to four centuries ago in a script and language close to modern Tamil. Some of the texts are devotional in character, but many are the exercises of two scribes. The leaves are now treasured as the sacred writings

115 167 614 (127)

614 615 are each exogamous, but may arrange marriages with members of either sib without being accused of marriage within a prohibited degree, simply because they are too small and isolated for many other hamlets to know anything about them. They thus constitute a kind of "structural safety-valve", for the precedent of a marriage with one of these hamlets can be used to validate an argument about any other hamlet's membership of either sib. This is possible because both Gauda sibs are unnamed, and are identified only by reciprocal terms meaning "brothers" (i.e. "our sib") and "in-laws" (i.e. "their sib"). These various peripheral hamlets also act as a kind of reservoir of boys and girls eligible for marriage with any hamlet in need of spouses.

582 615 While it is true that the vast majority of Gauda marriages are with members of the opposite sib, there have also been a number of permissible marriages arranged with members of other phratries. Both Haruvas and Kaggusis marry into either Gauda sib. A few Bedas may also have married into either Gauda sib. In three hamlets non-vegetarian Adikaris have intermarried with Gaudas, and are now treated as Gaudas. A very recent development has been the marriage of a few Badaga (581) Christian girls to Gauda boys, normally those with a college education. Christian girls enjoy a certain reputation among Badagas for their comparatively high level of education and their "freer" interaction with men. Where a Christian girl marries a Gauda her patrilineal ancestry must still trace back to the opposite sib from her groom's.

574 615 Gaudas are willing to eat in the houses of any other Badaga phratry, except for Toreyas and Badaga Christians. Adikaris, Kapakkas and Wodeyas only offer Gaudas food in the outer room; whereas Haruvas and Kaggusis allow them to eat in the inner room. In each of these cases the Gaudas may be meat-eaters, but

574 615 they will only be offered vegetarian food in the inner room. Usually it is only between two families related through a marriage that this latter situation might arise. Generally the vegetarians do not eat in non-vegetarian homes. Toreyas may be given food in the outer room of a Gauda house, but meat-eating Adikaris will eat in the inner room.

162 615 Few Badagas know of the existence of a Badaga phratry called Kumbara, so small are its numbers. The Kumbaras live in two nearby hamlets on the northern edge of the Nilgiris (Metz 1864: 60), and total only 50 households -- about 300 people. The two hamlets are two exogamous sibs, and where possible intermarry. 614 615 One of these hamlets, however, contains only ten families; so that the other hamlet [582] has to look elsewhere for most of its spouses. They do not intermarry with any other Badagas, but do arrange marriages with any of the several thousand families 615 of Kanarese Kumbaras who live in and around Mysore City. Although these latter are not Badagas the Kumbaras of the Nilgiris believe that the two groups have common ancestry. Those living in the Nilgiris nevertheless class themselves as Badagas, are recognized as such by their neighbors, and carry a distinctively Badaga culture almost identical with that of the Gaudas. Many Badagas who know of their existence believe that the Kumbaras actually are Gaudas.

172 615 Within a half-mile of one of the hamlets is a deserted fortification, said to have been constructed several centuries ago by the Raja of Ummattūr, a town of southern Mysore (Francis 1908: 350). Badaga folksongs indicate that the Kumbaras came into the hills in this Raja's retinue. The traditional occupation of their caste is ceramics, and although they no longer know how to make pots there are any number of broken sherds stratified at a depth of 2-3 meters in the ramparts of the old 186 615 fortification to testify to their former industry on this spot. On the basis of this

614 generations, although the Toreyas themselves are hazy about its causes. Provided
615 the two sibs really are exogamous and each only marries with the other, their num-
(169) bers should become roughly equal by the end of this century. Apparently one of the frequent epidemics which plague this area ravaged one of the sibs early in the present century while leaving the hamlets of the other relatively unscathed. The latter sib now includes large numbers of unmarried men and women.

How are the Toreyas handling this challenge? Strangely enough, in view of
615 the well-known precedents set them by other Badaga phratries, the Toreyas have not resorted to the expedient of marrying outside their phratry, either to other Badagas or to Kanarese peasants. The only explanation for this behavior seems to be that they are poorer and less well educated than any other Badaga phratry, and they feel that marriage beyond the bounds of their own phratry would — far from relieving their tensions — threaten their very identity as a group.

The main solution they have attempted, and with considerable success,
595 615 is polygyny. This is a permissible form of marriage among all Badagas, although it is rarely practiced today. Those Toreya men of the smaller sib who can afford it nevertheless quite often take a second wife. Polyandry, on the other hand, is no longer a permissible form of Badaga marriage; although it was apparently common
595 until the end of the last century (Natesa Sastri 1892: 754). Even so, I believe that
614 cases of de facto fraternal polyandry occur among men of the larger Toreya sib
615 and contribute to a solution of the present problem. It can also be assumed that many of the unmarried women of the larger sib still succeed in becoming mothers. A Toreya girl is quite commonly the object of a Gauda boy's attentions; but although children may result from such a casual union, marriage never does.

•574 Toreyas can be offered vegetarian food in the houses of all other phratries
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574 615 and meat in those which habitually eat meat themselves. However, none of the other groups allows them into the inner, more sacred room; they are expected to eat in the outer one. "If they should eat food with other Badagas, the Toreas must clear away all remnants of the feast—nobody else will help" (Benbow 1928: 11). No other phratry will accept food in the house of a Toreya (Thurston 1911: 117).

In terms of the commensality rules which pertain in other parts of India, the Toreyas may therefore have the appearance of an untouchable group; and it is certainly true that they are the lowest of the Badaga phratries. There is a Badaga 574 609 rule, nevertheless, that all "foreigners" and plainsmen are not to enter the inner room of any Badaga's house. They can be offered food only on the veranda or in the outer room. The Badaga commensal rules — which hold true among the Toreyas as much as among the higher phratries — have often come as a surprise to visiting Brahmins, who find themselves excluded from entering the more sacred room of a Badaga house or from being offered food there. Badagas do not recognize high ritual status when it is found among people outside the Nilgiri system. The Brahmins of course rationalize the rebuff by saying that the Badagas are really Sudras, and therefore no Brahmin would pollute himself by accepting food from them.

Here a word about commensality with other non-Badagas might be in order. Wodeyas and Lingayats never allow any Nilgiri tribesman to enter their houses beyond the veranda; indeed, they will not permit any non-Lingayat visitor from the (615) plains to enter. Haruvas and all lower phratries, on the other hand, permit Todas, Kurumbas, Irulas and Kasubas to eat in the outer room. Kotas, and nowadays any lowlander thought to be an untouchable, are too polluting to allow past the veranda entrance, however.

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AW50 Badaga AW50

4. Visiting the Relatives: A Kin-based Institution

All Badagas are expected by their families to visit affinal and agnatic relatives with some regularity. The effect of this requirement is to keep the joint family ideal alive even after a household has broken up, and to sustain the ties with affines from whom one may at any time need either a spouse or a loan of money.

One such rule is that all Badagas must eat with their close relatives at least once a year. "Close relatives" here means those with whom one is involved in the performance of family ceremonies: it hence includes both one's closer agnates and some affines. Accordingly, a family either sends a message that the members are coming to visit some relatives, or will send an invitation for them to visit instead; and such visits involve minimally the eating of one meal. Everybody recognizes that if relatives do not eat together within a twelve-month period, it means that there is some ill-feeling between them. Steps may even be taken by village elders to locate and rectify the source of the friction, so that it may not impede the performance of ceremonies later on. There may of course be other reasons, such as distance or occupation, which make it impossible for relatives to get together; in this case they may still send gifts of food to each other once a year. In the modern day when business or study obligations can make these family feasts difficult to attend, some Badagas go so far as to prepare a special foodstuff before the twelve-month period since the last such feast has elapsed, a foodstuff which can be kept indefinitely and be fed to relatives whenever convenient, even after the twelve-month period is over.

A man visiting his wife's natal home is always an important guest whether or not he has received an invitation to come. Her family are all very respectful to him for fear he decrease the amount of his wife's contacts with them, which he is certainly in a position to do. For all family ceremonies or festivals in their village, they make sure he is among the first to be invited. When younger siblings of his wife are ready for marriage, he is consulted about a spouse, and may intensify the ties between the two families by suggesting his own sibling or parallel cousin. Hence, any villagers noticing that a man does not attend the ceremonies in which his wife's father is involved will conclude that he is snubbing his father-in-law for some reason.

Visits in the other direction, to the house of a married daughter or sister, are much more circumscribed. Her parents will not go to her husband's home without a good reason. They will however make occasional visits there just to emphasize the bond between the two families and to show that the parents still have affection for their daughter. Her brothers should equally have an invitation or a definite purpose for visiting her. In general, her natal family consider it rather lacking in dignity to visit her too often, and they will try to restrict the visits of any brother who seems especially fond of her. Her husband's family may well feel that very frequent visits from her brothers waste a woman's working time and can even become something of an economic drain.